THE HON'BLE SRI JUSTICE B. SUDERSHAN REDDY

WRIT PETITION No. 8412 of 2001

Dated: 1st September, 2005

Between:

K.Ram Kumar, S/o. Late Ramakrishnamacharyulu,
R/o. 1-75/16, Behind Tholappa Gardens,
Padmapriyanagar, Tiruchanur, Chittoor District - 517 503.

-- PETITIONER

AND

The Executive Officer, Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanams,
K.T.Road, Tirupathi, Chittoor District & another.

--RESPONDENTS

ORAL ORDER:

The petitioner invokes extraordinary jurisdiction of this Court under Article 226 of the Constitution of India with a prayer to issue a Writ of Mandamus directing the respondents not to put the closed circuit video cameras in the Garba Gruha of Sri Padmavathi Ammavaru Temple, Tiruchanoor.

The petitioner claims to be a person belonging to Srivaishnava Community and worshipper of Sri Padmavathi Ammavaru in Tiruchanoor near Tirupathi in Chittoor District. That according the custom, usage and Agama Sampradayam prevailing in Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple, Tirumala and all other temples under the management of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams including in Sri Padmavathi Ammavaru Temple in Tiruchanoor, no photography is to be permitted.

Aggrieved by the action of the Chief Vigilance Officer-cum-Security Officer and the Executive Officer, Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanams in directing the video cameras of closed circuit to be placed in the Garba Gruha showing the things which were prohibited to be shown under the Sastras and in violation of customary usage, Sampradayam and Agamas, the petitioner filed this writ petition.

In the counter affidavit filed by the Executive Officer, Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanams, it is explained that in view of the growing importance of the temple of Sri Padmavathi Ammavaru at Tirupati, it has been proposed to provide security tightening measures duly installing CC TV cameras in the temple for watching the movements of any mischievous elements in the temples. Such similar CC TV network has been established in Tirumala Temple. It was noticed that number of thefts have occurred in the queue lines whereby the pilgrims lost their cash and valuables including travel tickets resulting in grave hardship. It was also noticed that the income of the temple from Hundi was on increase and the receipts include valuables in addition to money. That in order to have very close watch on the movements of pilgrims as well as the proceedings of the parakamani, necessary steps have been initiated to install CC TVs at the places chosen excluding the sanctum sanctorum for coverage. It is further explained that there is no proposal either for installation of CC TV or allowing photography inside the sanctum sanctorum contrary to Agama Sampradaya. The CCTVs are arranged to watch the movements of the pilgrims, which in any manner affect any of the Agama Sampradayas.

The petitioner invokes the jurisdiction of this Court on mere apprehension as if the installation of closed TV circuit was likely to affect the prevailing sampradaya and as if the installed TVs were likely to show the proceedings in the sanctum sanctorum. In view of the clear and categorical statement made by the Executive Officer that the closed circuit TVs are not installed for that purpose and only to have a close watch on the pilgrims no relief can be granted to the writ petitioner. The writ petition is devoid of merits and the same shall, accordingly, stand dismissed without any order as to costs.

2005. (B.SUDERSHAN REDDY, J.)

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